



Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

Distr.: General
11 April 2025

Original: English

Annual session of 2025

17–19 June 2025

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

Evaluation

Report of the evaluation function of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, 2024

Summary

This report provides an overview of the performance of the UN-Women evaluation function in 2024. It highlights progress made in the evaluation activities to support implementation of the UN-Women Strategic Plan 2022–2025; captures key insights from the corporate and strategic evaluations that were completed; reviews key evaluation performance indicators; and offers updates on partnerships for gender-responsive evaluation within the UN system and for national evaluation capacity-building. The report also outlines the Independent Evaluation Service's (IES) programme of work and budget for 2025.

The Executive Board may wish to: (i) take note of the 2024 report on the evaluation function of UN-Women and the IES 2025 programme of work and budget; (ii) acknowledge that UN-Women maintains an independent, credible and useful evaluation function, contributing to system-wide, gender-responsive evaluation initiatives and national evaluation capacity development taking into account national plans, needs and priorities; and (iii) express continuing support for strengthening the evaluation function in UN-Women and the use of evaluations.



I. Overview

1. To accelerate implementation of the UN-Women Strategic Plan 2022–2025 and support development of the forthcoming UN-Women Strategic Plan 2026–2029, the Independent Evaluation Service (IES) of UN-Women continued to provide credible evaluative evidence on what works to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.
2. IES was on track to exceed the set targets contained in its Corporate Evaluation Plan 2022–2025. The goal was to complete 13 corporate evaluations and 30 regional and country portfolio evaluations by the end of 2025. As of December 2024, IES had completed 10 of 13 (77 per cent) corporate evaluations and synthesis reports, and 26 of 30 (86 per cent) regional and country portfolio evaluations. Work on three corporate evaluations and an evaluation synthesis, as well as several regional and country portfolio evaluations, was also initiated.
3. IES actively engaged in United Nations system-wide evaluations. These included evaluations conducted by the Global Sustainable Development Goals Synthesis Coalition, the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation Group and the United Nations Sustainable Development Group System-Wide Evaluation Office, as well as several UN Cooperation Framework Evaluations at the country level.
4. In 2024, key corporate evaluations covered UN-Women’s work on Women, Peace and Security, and Ending Violence Against Women. IES evaluated cross-thematic and systemic outcome areas as key levers of change, including social norm change and sustainable financing. In response to organizational needs, IES also implemented other types of independent assessments to support adaptive improvement and organizational learning. For example, IES conducted evaluability assessments of UN-Women’s work in India and Afghanistan, and a rapid assessment of online capacity development approaches in the Americas and the Caribbean.
5. UN-Women’s key performance indicators for evaluation were largely on track, covering aspects such as human resources for monitoring and evaluation, evaluation quality, joint evaluations, evaluation implementation and evaluation use. Nonetheless, some indicators, particularly evaluation expenditure, evaluation coverage and management response implementation, exhibited a slight decline, highlighting the need for additional efforts to enhance these areas.
6. Internally, IES assessed UN-Women’s evaluation function against the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards to support the function’s further strengthening and professionalization. This aligned IES with best practices across the UN system. The assessment further enhanced IES’ focus on capacity-building efforts for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) personnel and systems to improve evaluation use.
7. With the rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI), IES and the UN evaluation community explored tools to enhance evaluation data collection and analysis in a robust and ethical manner. AI is expected to improve efficiency and reduce costs in evaluation processes; however, it required a strong quality assurance mechanism. IES piloted AI tools to analyse existing evaluation reports against synthesis questions. Findings from this pilot are expected to refine the approach for AI use and establish key principles for its application in evaluation practices.
8. This report, presented in five parts, provides an overview of corporate evaluations and syntheses; summaries of strategic evaluations at the decentralized level and their dissemination and use; a review of the UN-Women evaluation function’s performance against key evaluation performance indicators; lessons from

partnerships for gender-responsive evaluation in the UN system and national capacity-building; and an outline of the IES programme of work and budget for 2025.

II. Corporate evaluations

Progress against the Corporate Evaluation Plan 2022–2025

9. In 2024, IES worked on five corporate evaluations and an evaluation synthesis, one joint evaluation synthesis and one formative assessment of UN-Women's programming approaches. The following section highlights insights and lessons from these corporate evaluations and reports.

Implementation of the Corporate Evaluation Plan

10. IES completed the following corporate evaluations, synthesis report and assessment in 2024:

- (a) Corporate Evaluation of UN-Women's Support to Women's Political Participation: Insights from the Field
- (b) Corporate Feminist Collaborative Evaluation of UN-Women's Approach to Social Norms Change
- (c) Getting There Together: A Synthesis of Inter-Agency Programme Evaluations on SDG 5
- (d) Formative Assessment of the UN-Women Gender Equality Accelerators.

Corporate Evaluation of UN-Women's Support to Women's Political Participation: Insights from the Field

11. This corporate thematic evaluation found that UN-Women aligned well with contextual drivers and mobilized coalitions and partnerships to deliver positive changes in legal and policy frameworks. Legislated quotas were a key driver in increasing the number of women in politics. Support from headquarters was found to be well-tailored to country-level needs and contributed to programme effectiveness. However, women continue to face persistent forms of opposition and resistance when engaging in politics. There is opportunity to strengthen UN-Women's advocacy and convening role by providing clearer guidance on engaging different kinds of coalitions, addressing key barriers to women's political participation, such as violence against women in politics, and enhancing the measurement of key results to demonstrate its impact at the country level. The evaluation team proposed five recommendations, all of which management accepted.

Corporate Feminist Collaborative Evaluation of UN-Women's Approach to Social Norms Change

12. The report highlighted that UN-Women's efforts to address social norms have been largely implicit and project-based, with the need for a more coherent and systemic approach given social norms' centrality to UN-Women's efforts. The evaluation underscored the importance of building internal coherence and competencies around social norms change programming, emphasizing the need for tailored and contextualized approaches, and long-term, flexible funding to support these efforts. The evaluation identified the lack of systematic programme data and measurement approaches on social norms change as a key challenge. It also noted the critical role of partnerships with grassroots organizations and the need for strategies to mitigate backlash against women's rights. The report calls for a clear organizational plan and investment in institutional capacity to effectively implement social norms

change programming, leveraging collaborative approaches and global south paradigms to ensure sustainable and transformative change. The evaluation team proposed five recommendations, all of which management accepted.

Getting There Together: A Synthesis of Inter-Agency Programme Evaluations on SDG 5

13. In partnership with the evaluation offices of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP, UN-Women led a synthesis of joint programme evaluations. This synthesis was a companion to *Are We Getting There? A Synthesis of UN System Evaluations of SDG 5*, which was conducted in 2023. The companion synthesis found that joint programmes enabled holistic approaches to address gender inequality, enhanced visibility of women's rights and helped create new partnerships. Despite higher transaction costs and coordination challenges, joint work enabled effective collaboration across sectors. There is need for clearer roles, streamlined processes and longer timelines to achieve results. Collectively, the results from both syntheses are intended to serve as a catalyst for action by providing policymakers, programme implementers, donors and UN entities with a series of implications to guide next steps and the evidence needed to advance their work to accelerate progress on SDG 5.

Formative Assessment of the UN-Women Gender Equality Accelerators (GEAs)

14. Aiming to achieve transformational results while leveraging the expertise and comparative advantages of UN-Women and United Nations partner organizations, UN-Women developed 10 GEAs as programmatic frameworks to implement UN-Women's Strategic Plan 2022–2025. In 2024, IES conducted a formative assessment of the GEAs to evaluate their design, operational infrastructure and monitoring mechanisms. The assessment found that while the GEAs clearly articulate strategic priorities for programming in UN-Women's thematic impact areas and promote more coherent programming through theories of action, they are not sufficiently integrated into UN-Women's Strategic Plan, including its results framework for monitoring and reporting. The assessment also identified a lack of socialization and limited coordination mechanisms to support implementation of the GEAs. The assessment concluded that the development of the Strategic Plan 2026–2029 presents an opportunity for UN-Women to address the issues highlighted in the formative assessment by further clarifying GEA implementation approaches.

Evaluations initiated in 2024

15. IES initiated the following corporate evaluations and synthesis in 2024:

- (a) Corporate Evaluation of UN-Women's Approach to Violence Against Women Prevention and Response: Navigating Changes in Global and Regional Contexts
- (b) Corporate Formative Evaluation of UN-Women's Work in Sustainable Finance
- (c) Corporate Evaluation on UN-Women's Support to Women in Peace-Building Processes
- (d) Evaluation Synthesis Against the Performance of UN-Women's Strategic Plan.

Evaluations for decision-making and fostering change

16. IES remains committed to strengthening UN-Women's use of evaluation findings in corporate planning and decision-making processes. IES maintains regular

dialogue with UN-Women's Senior Management team and Business Review Committees to inform the Entity's strategic priorities and needs. IES contributed to UN-Women's technical review processes, offering evaluation insights on Strategic Notes and providing input to Project Appraisal Committees at both regional and global levels. In 2024, IES actively engaged in the development of the Strategic Plan 2026–2029 by providing summaries of evaluation findings and participating in organizational consultations throughout the process.

17. IES continued to work closely with the Strategic Planning Unit and the Programme Support Management Unit to update corporate guidelines, including on project implementation, monitoring and reporting, and closure procedures. These updates aimed to provide more comprehensive guidance on evaluation planning, implementation and use, while also aligning with the overall prioritization of strategic and thematic evaluations, as UN-Women shifts away from smaller-scale evaluations.

18. The following examples illustrate how UN-Women management consulted recent corporate evaluation findings and recommendations to improve the Entity's policies, strategies and programmes, aiming to foster change in 2024.

Corporate Evaluation of UN-Women's Contribution to Women's Economic Empowerment by Advancing Gender-Responsive Laws, Frameworks, Policies and partnerships

19. UN-Women has accelerated support for global discourse and normative frameworks on women's economic empowerment, while advocating for gender-responsive approaches. In 2024, UN-Women launched the Women's Economic Empowerment Strategy, which contains a clear articulation of key definitions and a framework for women's economic empowerment. The Strategy has shaped UN-Women's approach to mobilizing resources by crystalizing the three GEAs: Women and the World of Work, Transform Care and Gender-Responsive Climate Action in the Blue and Green Economies. Within these frameworks, UN-Women has developed sustainable approaches to addressing structural barriers that impede women's economic empowerment and refined its approach to "leave no one behind", including through the Generation Equality Action Coalitions on Economic Justice and Rights and Feminist Action for Climate Justice. As a result of this strategy, seed funding was secured to advance the GEAs, as well as to bolster UN-Women's internal capacity for monitoring and reporting; and data, evidence and knowledge, and management. To systematize partnerships for women's economic empowerment, UN-Women has strengthened engagement with international financial institutions, including through the Gender Coalition of Finance in Common.

Corporate Evaluation of UN-Women's Support to Gender Statistics 2018–2022

20. In 2024, UN-Women implemented key actions to advance its gender statistics agenda through the Women Count initiative and the 10 GEAs, addressing recommendations from the Corporate Evaluation of UN-Women's Support to Gender Statistics from 2018 to 2022. At the global level, a socialization session was conducted to guide business units in scaling-up gender statistics efforts. Insights from this session will inform how UN-Women's continuing support to gender statistics will be integrated into the UN-Women Strategic Plan 2026–2029. Regional Offices received support to expand strategic partnerships, including collaborations with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank, driving coordination through regional frameworks such as the Africa Programme on Gender Statistics Phase III. UN-Women also strengthened its inter-agency coordination role through mechanisms such as the Inter-Agency and Expert Groups on the Sustainable Development Goals, and launched the Collaborative on Citizen

Generated Data to enhance participatory data practices. Notable progress in gender and climate data included supporting gender-environment surveys in eight countries. Internally, capacity-building initiatives focused on expanding regional projects, strengthening technical staff and adapting training materials to address emerging areas such as AI and intersectionality. Ongoing efforts to diversify funding through non-core resource mobilization remained a key priority.

Corporate Formative Evaluation of UN-Women's Work in the Area of Climate Change

21. In response to the corporate formative evaluation and the need to develop a climate strategy, UN-Women assessed its capacities and resources for climate change initiatives. Aligning with the current Strategic Plan, relevant GEAs and the evaluation findings, UN-Women continued to promote gender-responsive climate action particularly at the normative level. To achieve this, UN-Women crafted an engagement strategy for the three Rio Convention Conferences of the Parties in 2024, including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change process, which was successfully executed. As part of these efforts, UN-Women published a working paper and a policy brief titled “Advancing Gender-Responsive Synergies Across the Rio Conventions: Gender equality at the intersection of climate action, biodiversity protection and sustainable land management.

III. Decentralized and strategic independent evaluations

22. UN-Women's evaluation activities are largely carried out at the decentralized level by Regional and Country Offices. IES provides technical and quality assurance support for these decentralized evaluations, which include thematic, programmatic and project evaluations. In 2024, 50 decentralized evaluations were conducted, including 27 completed programme/project evaluations and 23 others at various stages of the evaluation process as of the end of 2024. In addition to providing technical assistance, IES leads strategic evaluations, such as independent regional and country portfolio evaluations. In 2024, IES conducted 18 strategic independent evaluations at the regional and country levels, including two regional Strategic Note evaluations, four regional thematic evaluations and 12 country portfolio evaluations across all regions. Of these, six strategic independent evaluations were completed in 2024, as summarized below.

IES-led Country Portfolio Evaluation Niger Niger Country Office

23. The evaluation of UN-Women's work in Niger concluded that UN-Women pragmatically opted to focus on supporting the government and civil society in addressing the country's gender inequality issues. The evaluation found that UN-Women had advanced women's representation in parliament and ministerial positions in Niger; however, initiatives around political participation, as well as other thematic areas for UN-Women such as women's economic empowerment, required more sustained efforts and synergy among UN agencies. UN-Women's work in Niger demonstrated good sustainability practices through participatory and inclusive planning. The Niger Country Office will need to address certain challenges – rapid growth, heavy workloads and instability in employment contracts – to adequately continue its support for gender mainstreaming and UN coordination mechanisms. The evaluation team proposed six recommendations, all of which management accepted.

Country Portfolio Evaluation Burundi Burundi Country Office

24. The evaluation found that UN-Women's work in Burundi was well-aligned with national and international strategic frameworks. Through collaborations with the media, young people and civil society, the Burundi Country Office has been effective in creating positive changes in social attitudes and behaviours to reduce violence against women and girls. Joint interventions between the UN-Women portfolio and United Nations Country Team across eight joint projects and initiatives were identified as successful collaborations. Targeted investments have promoted women's participation in decision-making bodies; strengthened the network of women mediators; and reduced the vulnerability of women and girls to humanitarian emergencies. However, the Country Office currently lacks the human resources to adequately support its partners and carry out strategic planning and monitoring activities. The evaluation team proposed six recommendations, all of which management accepted.

IES-led Country Portfolio Evaluation Rwanda Rwanda Country Office

25. This evaluation found that the Rwanda Country Office had effectively delivered key results contributions in women's leadership, economic empowerment and ending violence against women through capacity-building, advocacy and policy reforms. Its normative contributions included revisions to national laws for gender equality and integrating gender-sensitive responses to COVID-19, with room for bolder policy advocacy on challenging gender issues. Increasing its coordination and normative work would enable the Country Office to better leverage its value add. While the Country Office's activities aligned with national priorities, some short-term projects affected the relevance of the office's work. Adopting a robust resource mobilization strategy and more targeted portfolio could enhance operational efficiency. The Country Office's partnerships could be strengthened by increasing engagement and information-sharing, more timely planning and moving to more strategic partnerships. The evaluation team proposed four recommendations, all of which management accepted.

IES-led Country Portfolio Evaluation Mali Mali Country Office

26. The evaluation found that UN-Women's Country Office's portfolio is aligned well with Mali's national development priorities, such as the Framework for Economic Recovery and Sustainable Development, and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework. However, the evaluation concluded that there were opportunities to deepen the integration of human rights commitments, particularly for efforts designed to reduce harmful practices such as female genital mutilation and early marriage. Legislative advocacy and support for women candidates in Mali contributed to significant achievements, but there were opportunities for further impact in economic empowerment and promoting women's involvement in the digital economy and entrepreneurship. The Country Office has shown a strong commitment to sustainability, but there remains a need to reinforce long-term planning and exit strategies earlier in project cycles. The evaluation team proposed three recommendations, all of which management accepted.

IES-led Country Portfolio Evaluation Timor-Leste Timor-Leste Country Office

27. The evaluation found that UN-Women's Country Office in Timor-Leste made several key contributions to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in the country across its triple mandate. The Country Office supported progress in the development and implementation of key national action plans and frameworks, particularly in the areas of Women, Peace and Security and Ending Violence Against Women and Girls. However, the evaluation also identified challenges in translating these normative gains into sustainable results at the community level, as efforts at the community level were spread thinly across multiple activities, target groups and geographic areas, making it difficult to achieve meaningful and lasting change. The evaluation noted that while the Country Office had taken on leadership roles in key coordination platforms on gender equality and women's empowerment, the effectiveness of these roles was hindered by infrequent meetings and lack of strategic focus. The report recommended prioritizing the translation of policies into action, enhancing coordination efforts, more systematic capacity-building approaches, stronger results tracking and adopting a comprehensive strategy for inclusive programming to ensure meaningful engagement of marginalized groups. The evaluation team proposed seven recommendations, six of which were accepted, and one of which was partially accepted.

IES-led UN-Women Syria Programme, Phase II Evaluation Regional Office for Arab States

28. The evaluation found that the Syria Programme was well aligned to the national context and international normative frameworks and demonstrated agility in responding to changing contextual challenges such as a stalled political process, the COVID-19 pandemic and the earthquake which took place in February 2023. The Syria Programme's coordination approach and strategic partnerships, particularly with the Office of the Special Envoy for Syria, were important in strengthening Syrian women's voices and participation in political processes. Another comparative advantage of the Syria Programme was its ability to bring together international stakeholders, Syrian women activists and civil society organizations. However, at the time of the evaluation, UN-Women was not part of the United Nations Country Team, which impacted the Entity's ability to strengthen coordination efforts on gender equality and women's empowerment in the country. The evaluation also noted that a more systematic approach to knowledge management and learning was required. The evaluation team proposed seven recommendations, all of which were accepted.

Internal evaluation capacity development

29. IES continued its efforts to strengthen evaluation capacity by providing a range of capacity-building initiatives, including training, targeted coaching, technical support, and knowledge-sharing activities on gender-responsive evaluation and the integration of evaluation into programme and project planning. These initiatives were delivered through various regional capacity-building efforts. In 2024, UN-Women trained over 570 personnel and provided more focused coaching to M&E focal points across multiple offices and country contexts. These training sessions and coaching equipped UN-Women personnel with practical tools for evaluation planning and implementation, and provided a deeper understanding of gender-responsive evaluation methodologies.

30. In the Asia and Pacific region, UN-Women organized learning sessions on gender-responsive evaluation, engaging approximately 217 personnel from UN-Women and its programme teams. These sessions included a refresher course on

gender-responsive evaluation. The training enhanced participants' understanding of evaluation methodologies and emphasized the importance of integrating evaluability assessments from the project's inception. This region's increased demand for evaluability assessments indicated a growing awareness of their significance. In the East and Southern Africa region, IES hosted a learning session on UN-Women's Independent Evaluation, Audit and Investigation Services (IEAIS) function, attended by over 140 participants from various countries. IES also provided a session covering norms, policies and procedures from the UN-Women Handbook for Gender-Responsive Evaluation, as part of the Regional Office of Arab States retreat. At the country level, IES incorporated evaluation training into a week-long programme management training with the participation of 30 personnel at the Jordan Country Office. Participants learned about UN-Women's evaluation processes, the importance of gender-responsive evaluations within the UN system, and the key frameworks and policies guiding these evaluations. In the Americas and Caribbean region, IES conducted in-person training sessions in Ecuador, Brazil and Mexico, which brought together over 185 UN-Women personnel and external stakeholders, with 50 attending virtually. These sessions focused on the practical application of gender-responsive evaluation methodologies. IES also supported the certification of several M&E focal points as Gender-Responsive Evaluation Managers as part of the UN-Women Evaluation Professionalization Initiative in West and Central Africa and the Americas and Caribbean regions.

Communication to facilitate the use of evaluation

31. IES continued to invest in user-friendly knowledge products; leverage online and social media channels; and encourage greater interaction among UN-Women personnel and stakeholders as it prioritized evaluation use in 2024. IES initiated development of the UN-Women Strategy on Evaluation Use, aimed at ensuring evaluative evidence is systematically integrated into strategic decision-making and programming across UN-Women's work.

32. To enhance the use of evaluations at regional and country levels, various communication strategies and knowledge management products were developed, including webinars, briefs, newsletters and digital toolkits. These products facilitated stakeholder engagement with evaluation findings for evidence-based programming. In Asia and the Pacific, IES organized webinars for the Evaluation Community of Practice, sharing key insights from the Empower Programme evaluation and assessments in India and Afghanistan. In the Arab States, a briefing session was held for the Regional Women, Peace and Security Team following the Syria Programme Evaluation Phase II. In West and Central Africa, two webinars disseminated findings from the Empowering Women in Agriculture Through ICT project in Côte d'Ivoire and the Promoting Inclusive Political Participation project in Liberia. In the Americas and the Caribbean, a regional webinar presented findings an evaluation in Colombia, while the gender-responsive budgeting evaluation was shared through technical briefs and government dialogues, influencing public finance policies. In East and Southern Africa, over 140 participants attended a learning session on the evaluation of the Leadership, Empowerment, Access and Protection (LEAP) programme, and two regional newsletters featuring 10 evaluation briefs were disseminated in 2024, ensuring ongoing knowledge-sharing.

IV. Performance of the evaluation function in UN-Women

33. UN-Women employs performance monitoring systems to enhance transparency and accountability in evaluations. These systems also help report the performance of the evaluation function against key performance indicators (KPIs). Table 1

summarizes the results for 2024 and the historical trends for the Strategic Plan 2022–2025 cycle.

Table 1
Evaluation KPIs and targets for UN-Women’s Strategic Plan 2022–2025

<i>KPI</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>2022</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2024</i>	<i>Target (by 2025)</i>
Financial resources invested in evaluation function	Evaluation expenditure over UN-Women programme expenditure (%)	1.9	2.3	1.6	Between 2.0–3.0 ^a
Human resources for monitoring and evaluation	Offices that appointed an M&E focal point or officer (%)	98	97	99	100
Evaluation coverage	At least one evaluation per Strategic Note cycle (%)	93	98	96	100
Evaluation implementation rate	Percentage of evaluations being implemented (%)	92	84	87	100
Quality of evaluation reports	Percentage of evaluation reports rated “Good and above” (%)	86	100	100	100
Joint evaluations ^b	Percentage of joint evaluations contributed by UN-Women (%)	29	27	35	25
Management response submission to GATE	Percentage of completed evaluation reports submitted with management response to GATE (%)	100	100	100	100
Implementation of management response	Percentage of management response key actions being implemented (%)	91	92	86	95
Use of evaluations	Percentage of offices that reported using evaluation (%)	87	89	90	95

^a The revised Evaluation Policy (2020) recommends that UN-Women allocate between 2 and 3 per cent of its total programme expenditure to the evaluation function.

^b The evaluation KPI on joint evaluations tracks UN-Women’s contribution to all joint evaluations and initiatives, including independent, system-wide evaluations at the global level and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework evaluations.

Key Performance Indicator 1: Financial resources invested in evaluation

Table 2
Evaluation function expenditure 2022–2024 (US\$)

	<i>2022</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2024</i>
Total UN-Women programme expenditure	441 317 504	465 264 805	532 603 396
Total expenditure on evaluation	8 224 073	10 493 407	8 480 005
IES/IEAS	3 800 044	3 882 841	4 047 523
Decentralized evaluations ⁴	4 424 029	6 610 566	4 432 482
Total expenditure (%)	1.9	2.3	1.6

Source: “Total UN-Women programme expenditure” and “IES expenditure” values were generated from Quantum by the Division of Management and Administration (DMA). Values for decentralized evaluations were calculated based on figures by DMA and supplemented by IES data.

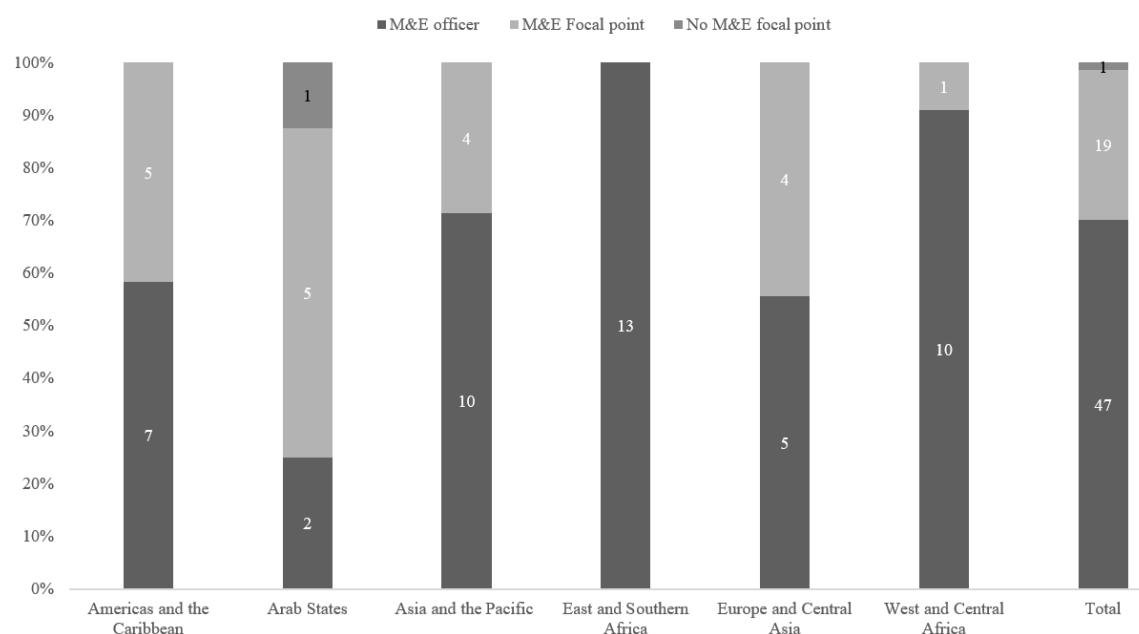
34. According to unaudited expenditure data provided by the UN-Women Division of Management and Administration (DMA) and reviewed by IES, total spending on evaluation in 2024 was estimated at US\$8.48 million. This reflects a decrease in the evaluation expenditure ratio to 1.6% of UN-Women's programme expenditure, down from 2.3% in 2023 (See Table 2). Total expenditure for IES/IEAS in 2024, including staff costs for its Regional Evaluation Specialists, was US\$4.05 million, while US\$4.43 million was spent on decentralized evaluation activities. The decrease in the evaluation expenditure ratio was largely due to a decrease in spending on decentralized evaluations, primarily related to the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women and the Spotlight Initiative, which had mainly driven the substantial increase in 2023. In addition, UN-Women's total programme expenditure increased by 14.5 per cent from US\$465.2 million in 2023 to US\$532.6 million in 2024, contributing to the decrease in the overall ratio. IES will continue to advocate for sufficient resource allocation to evaluation activities, in response to the growing demand for continued learning and accountability from high-quality evaluations.

Key Performance Indicator 2: Human resources for monitoring and evaluation

35. In 2024, IES continued to function under the leadership of the Chief of Evaluation and the Director of IEAIS. Evaluation activities were carried out by a team of six evaluation staff at headquarters, along with six regional evaluation specialists whose posts are positioned in UN-Women's Regional Offices, all reporting to the Chief of Evaluation. Evaluations were supported as needed by individual experts, consultants and interns.

36. At the decentralized level, all UN-Women Country and Regional Offices had at least one M&E officer or focal point in 2024, except for one Country Office in Arab States region (Iraq Country Office). This represents a slight increase from 97 per cent in 2023 to 99 per cent in 2024. Of these, 70 per cent (47 out of 67) had M&E officers, while 28 per cent (19 out of 67) had M&E focal points (see Figure 1).

Figure 1
Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) officers/focal points by region in 2024



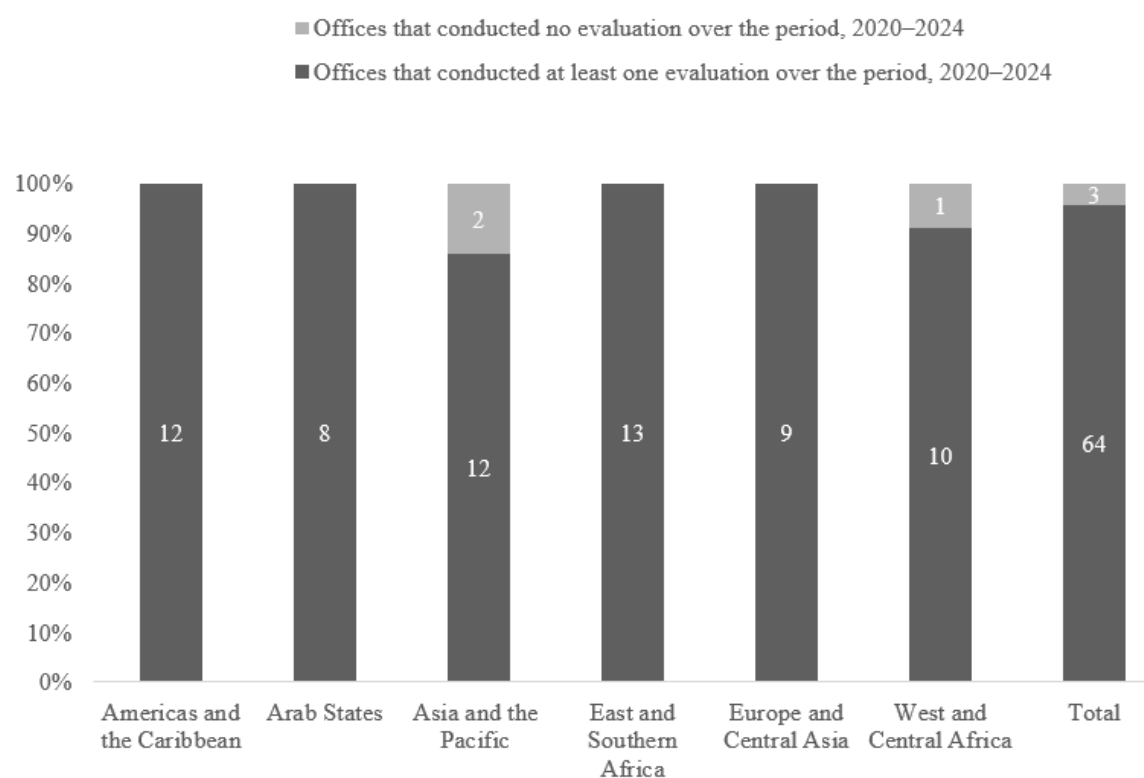
Source: Global Evaluation Oversight System

Key Performance Indicator 3: Evaluation coverage

37. The revised UN-Women Evaluation Policy and evaluation coverage norms mandate adequate evaluation coverage of key UN-Women programmatic and operational areas. Between 2020 and 2024, 96 per cent of Regional and Country Offices completed at least one evaluation during their Strategic Note cycle, compared to 98 per cent in 2023. However, three Country Offices – Afghanistan, Myanmar and Sierra Leone – were exceptions (see Figure 2). In the case of Myanmar, the challenging context, including political sensitivities, made it difficult to conduct evaluation activities, particularly given the remote working arrangement from Thailand. In Afghanistan, IES conducted an Evaluability Assessment in April 2024 to support and inform a strategic cluster evaluation covering most of UN-Women’s work in the country. This evaluation exercise had already begun and is scheduled for completion in September 2025.

Figure 2

Evaluation coverage by region, by Strategic Note cycle 2020–2024



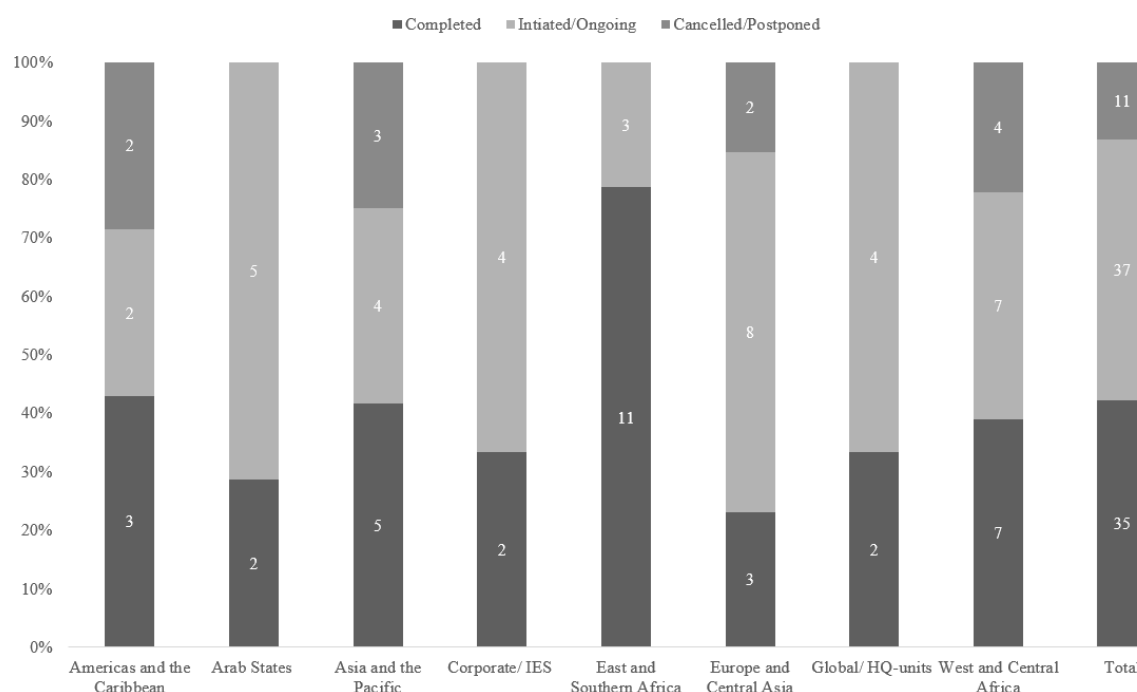
Source: Global Evaluation Oversight System

Key Performance Indicator 4: Implementation rate of planned evaluations

38. As shown in Figure 3, of the 83 planned evaluations for 2024, 35 (42 per cent) were completed (compared to 52 per cent in 2023). An additional 37 evaluations (45 per cent) were initiated and were at various stages of implementation (compared to 32 per cent in 2023). Eleven evaluations (13 per cent) were either postponed (nine evaluations) or cancelled (two evaluations). The frequent reasons for planned evaluations being cancelled or postponed include the extension of the project timeframe, a change to another type of assessment, or merging planned project evaluations into thematic or strategic evaluations. While a slight increase in the overall implementation rate occurred, the total number of evaluations conducted by

UN-Women decreased in 2024 (compared to 102 evaluations in 2023). This may be attributed to IES advocating for offices to prioritize more strategic evaluations – such as country portfolio evaluations, thematic evaluations and regional evaluations – rather than conducting small-scale project evaluations. It should also be noted that apart from the comprehensive evaluations managed by UN-Women, IES contributed to several other evaluation activities in 2024, including evaluability assessments, rapid assessments, country-led evaluations and mid-term reviews, and engaged in joint evaluation activities led by other entities.

Figure 3
Evaluation implementation rate for 2024



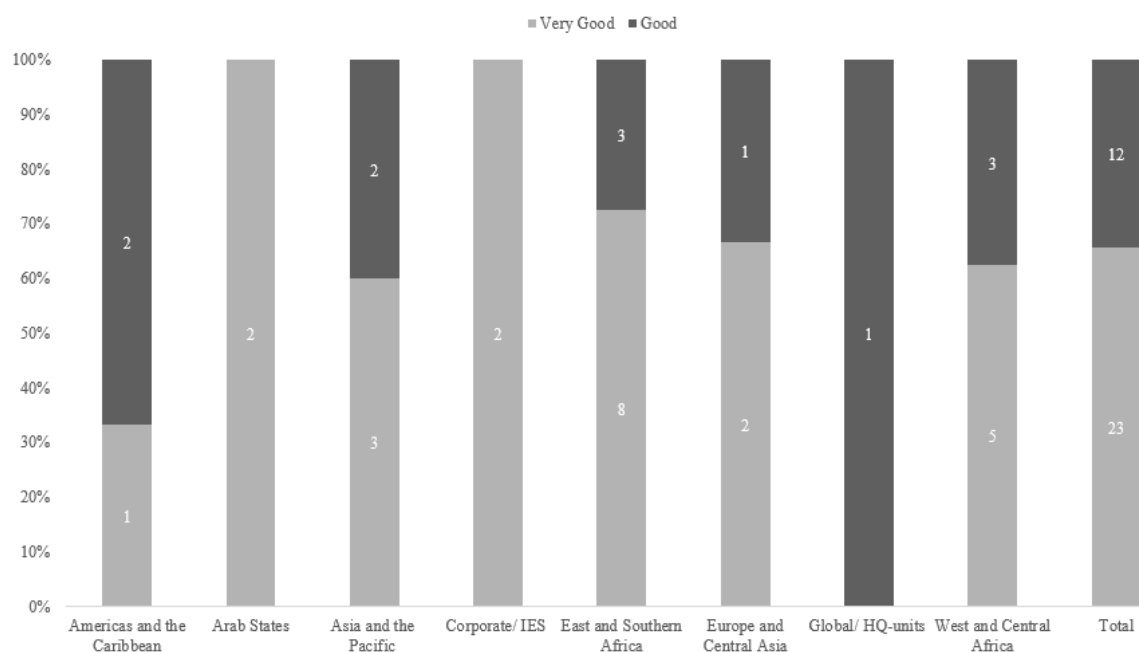
Source: Global Evaluation Oversight System

Key Performance Indicator 5: Quality of evaluation reports

39. UN-Women engages an external quality assessment of final evaluation reports based on nine predefined criteria outlined by the Global Evaluation Report Assessment and Analysis System (GERAAS). This assessment serves as an indicator of the reliability of evaluation results and the extent to which the findings can be confidently used to inform future programming and other strategic purposes.

40. As in 2023, in 2024, all UN-Women evaluation reports (100 per cent) obtained an overall rating of “Very Good” (23 evaluation reports) or “Good” (12 evaluation reports), reflecting the consistently high quality of both corporate and decentralized evaluations (see Figure 4). Among the seven corporate and IES-led strategic evaluations conducted in 2024, all were rated “Very Good”, except for one evaluation, which received a rating of “Good”.

Figure 4
Quality of evaluation reports 2024



Source: Global Evaluation Reports Assessment and Analysis System

Key Performance Indicator 6: Joint evaluations

41. IES continued to promote United Nations system coherence, coordination and accountability for gender equality and the empowerment of women through its engagement with system-wide evaluations and joint evaluations. The level of collaboration in joint evaluations can range from cooperative involvement in the evaluation process to resource pooling and combined reporting. UN-Women has actively participated in joint evaluations in recent years.

42. In 2024, UN-Women was involved in 42 joint evaluation initiatives, representing 35 per cent of the total evaluations undertaken throughout the year. This marks a substantial increase compared to the 27 joint evaluation initiatives (27 per cent) conducted in 2023. The initiatives included two independent system-wide syntheses; the inter-agency humanitarian evaluations in Somalia and Turkiye/Syria; the evaluation of the Spotlight Initiative; and 24 United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework evaluations to which UN-Women contributed. Among these joint evaluation activities, in 2024, six were completed under the leadership or co-management of UN-Women.

Key Performance Indicator 7: Management response submission to GATE

43. Management response is a critical step in enhancing accountability, transparency and learning by encouraging UN-Women to reflect on evaluation recommendations and identify areas for improvement. In this regard, UN-Women offices are expected to complete and upload management responses to the Global Accountability and Tracking of Evaluation Use (GATE) system portal within six weeks of finalizing an evaluation report.

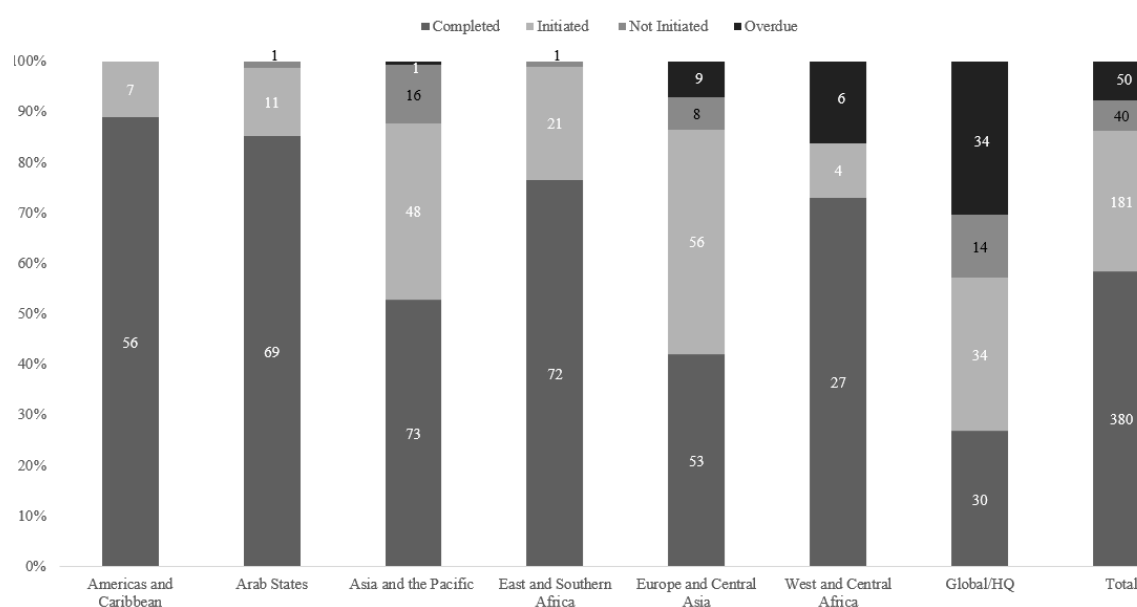
44. All 35 completed evaluations in 2024 had received a finalized management response at the time of this reporting, continuing the 100 per cent rate achieved in 2023. IES observed that timely completion and approval of management response

within the six-week timeframe was challenging at times. IES will continue to support the timeliness and completion of management response, including through follow-up with its Regional Evaluation Specialists who work closely with Country Offices.

Key Performance Indicator 8: Implementation status of management response

45. Following completion of 51 UN-Women evaluations in 2023, management committed to 651 key actions.¹ As of January 2025, 380 actions (58 per cent) were reported by management as completed, 181 (28 per cent) were in progress, 40 (6 per cent) had not been initiated and 50 (8 per cent) were considered overdue (see Figure 5). The overall implementation rate (86 per cent in 2024) decreased compared to the previous year (92 per cent in 2023). This may be partly due to the recent change in the tracking system, which promotes a more rigorous and timelier implementation of key actions by marking all initiated actions that have exceeded the set timeline as overdue. A closer analysis showed that the majority of the overdue actions (39 key actions) were those for which management had initiated implementation but exceeded the set deadlines. IES will continue to follow up to ensure the completion of all key commitments, as well as support the development of key actions within realistic timelines.

Figure 5
Management response implementation rate as of January 2025



Source: Global Evaluation Oversight System

Key Performance Indicator 9: Use of evaluation to inform programming

46. Based on the annual reporting data collected from UN-Women's Results Management System and IES' survey on evaluation use, a majority of field offices (90 per cent) leveraged evidence and lessons learned from recent evaluations to inform their programming and interventions (compared to 89 per cent in 2023).

47. It has been reported that evaluation activities played a critical role in shaping strategic planning processes at the country level, particularly in the development of Strategic Notes and biannual workplans (e.g. Afghanistan, China, Colombia,

¹ This does not include 49 key actions marked as "no longer applicable".

El Salvador, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Mali and Timor-Leste). Insights from evaluations also strengthened UN-Women's programming approach and helped identify emerging opportunities for several Country Offices, including Albania, Bangladesh, Brazil, Rwanda and Zimbabwe. Findings and recommendations were used to support resource mobilization; guide the design of new project proposals; and facilitate learning within UN-Women and its partners through lessons learned from evaluations.

V. Working in partnership for gender-responsive evaluation

Strengthening gender-responsive evaluation within the UN system

48. In 2024, IES continued to co-convene the UNEG Gender Equality, Disability and Human Rights Working Group. Key achievements for the year included publication of the updated "Guidance Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation," (first published in 2014). The revised guidance is the outcome of a consultative and collaborative effort of members from across 11 agencies. The guidance aims to assist evaluators and evaluation managers in conducting assessments that address the diverse needs of all individuals and communities, embodying the principle of "leaving no one behind," which is central to the transformative 2030 Agenda. It includes discussions on intersectionality and disability inclusion. Beyond fostering inclusion, the guidance provides a rich array of updated tools and examples from UN entities to strengthen evaluation methods and promote effective practices that incorporate gender equality, disability inclusion and human rights considerations throughout the evaluation process. IES also led and/or contributed to several dissemination events related to the guidance, including the delivery of a workshop and seminar during UNEG's EvalWeek in 2024, as well as an in-person launch event in New York, in collaboration with other UN agencies.

United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women Evaluation Performance Indicator

49. IES continued to serve as the secretariat for the UN-SWAP Evaluation Performance Indicator (EPI) in 2024. This entailed reviewing EPI submissions from all entities and the preparation of the annual UNEG report on the SWAP EPI. The reporting for 2024 revealed a similar performance compared to the previous year. The percentage of UN entities meeting or exceeding requirements remained steady at 89 per cent, indicating no notable change in overall ratings. For the 2025 UN-SWAP reporting period, IES commissioned an external review of the 35 evaluations completed in 2024. Based on the assessment, UN-Women continues to "exceed requirements" for the EPI.

System-wide synthesis

50. In partnership with the evaluation offices of UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF and WFP, UN-Women continued to serve as co-chair of the People Pillar (SDGs 1–5) of the Global SDG Synthesis Coalition. The coalition brings together over 40 UN entities alongside global evaluation and synthesis networks. The initiative aims to synthesize rigorous and evaluative evidence organized around the five pillars of the SDGs. The first synthesis being conducted by the People Pillar is the Synthesis of Implementation and Effectiveness of Social Protection Interventions to Reach the Furthest Behind (SDGs 1–5). The final report is expected to be finalized in 2025.

Partnerships for national evaluation capacity development

51. Throughout 2024, IES provided technical support to country-led evaluations of national gender strategies and/or policies at the regional and country levels, as well as to capacity-building and partnership initiatives. Examples include technical guidance to UN-Women Liberia in support of the country-led evaluation of the Liberia National Gender Policy (2018–2022); technical support to the Southern African Development Community Mid-Term Review of its gender-based violence strategy; support to national partners on a Gender-Budgeting Tracking country-led evaluation in Colombia; and a peacebuilding country-led evaluation in Guatemala. In terms of capacity-building, IES facilitated learning sessions for over 268 participants on gender-responsive evaluation in South Korea, Indonesia, Ecuador, Brazil and Mexico, as well as in the Arab States and East and Southern Africa regions in collaboration with UN agencies and regional evaluation networks such as EvalMena and the African Evaluation Association. IES continued strengthening the gender scanner tool as part of the National Evaluation Capacity Index initiative in the Americas and the Caribbean region.

52. At the global level, IES strengthened its partnership with the Global Evaluation Initiative (GEI) and EvalGender+ with various online dissemination events to advance the use of gender-responsive evaluation tools, and launched the Small Awards Programme for feminist innovation in monitoring and evaluation.

VI. 2025 IES programme of work

53. In alignment with UN-Women’s Evaluation Strategy 2022–2025 and Corporate Evaluation Plan 2022–2025, IES will continue to work on the following five key areas, while considering emerging organizational priorities and contextual changes.

Strategic evaluations and activities at the corporate level

54. IES will finalize two corporate evaluations to be presented to the Executive Board in its 2025 formal and informal sessions: (i) a corporate evaluation of UN-Women’s support to women’s participation in peace-building processes; and (ii) a corporate evaluation of UN-Women’s approach to violence against women prevention and response: navigating changes in global and regional contexts. IES will conduct and complete a synthesis of UN-Women’s performance against the Strategic Plan, which will be presented to the Executive Board in 2026. At the beginning of 2025, IES will finalize a formative corporate evaluation of UN-Women’s work on sustainable finance. IES will review the Evaluation Policy and Evaluation Strategy and develop a new 2026–2029 Corporate Evaluation Plan.

Strategic evaluations and technical assistance at the decentralized level

55. In 2025, the Regional Evaluation Specialists will conduct approximately 20 strategic regional evaluations and country portfolio assessments. IES will uphold the Global Evaluation and Oversight System, monitor evaluation KPIs, facilitate external assessments of the quality of decentralized evaluation reports and foster a culture of evaluation among staff through training and coaching. IES will also offer technical support to approximately 70 planned programme/project evaluations and joint evaluations spearheaded by the respective country, regional and headquarters offices.

Partnerships with the UN system and national stakeholders to promote gender-responsive evaluations

56. IES will actively engage in UN system-wide evaluations to ensure that evaluations have a gender lens and participate in multiple joint evaluation activities. IES will contribute to the finalization of two Inter -Agency Humanitarian Evaluations in Turkiye/Syria and Somalia. It will co-chair the People Pillar Synthesis of the Global SDG Synthesis Coalition and will continue to engage in the system-wide evaluations led by the United Nations Sustainable Development Group System-Wide Evaluation Office.

57. IES will participate in eight UNEG working groups and continue to play a leadership role by co-convening the UNEG Gender Equality, Disability and Human Rights Working Group. IES will lead the report on the UN-SWAP EPI and serve as a “gender desk” for UNEG.

58. IES will engage in national gender-responsive evaluation capacity development through EvalGender+ and the GEI. On a demand basis, it will provide targeted technical support to country-led evaluations of gender strategies and actions plans.

Strengthening evaluation use and communication

59. IES will continue to provide evidence supporting implementation of the UN-Women Strategic Plan 2022–2025 through its involvement in the Global Management Team, Business Review Committee and other strategic meetings. It will provide a synthesis of evaluation findings on what works and what needs improvement for the development of UN-Women’s new Strategic Plan. Communication materials, webinars on evaluation findings and social media platforms will also remain pivotal for disseminating evaluation findings and recommendations to both UN-Women and broader audiences. To enhance the utility of IES-led strategic and decentralized evaluations, IES will monitor the degree of evaluation use in key strategic planning documents and organizational processes. IES will also engage in learning partnerships with the Policy, Programme and Intergovernmental Division and Strategy, Planning, Resource and Effectiveness Division, contributing to overall UN-Women knowledge management by sharing and leveraging evaluation findings and evidence.

Budget for IES 2025 Programme of Work

60. Like previous years, the 2024 budget for IES is US\$ 3,431,000. The budget consists of the institutional budget (US\$ 2,281,000) and core programmable resources (US\$ 1,150,000).

Annex**UN-Women evaluations completed in 2024**

#	Region	Country	Type	Title	Quality Rating
1	Americas and the Caribbean	Brazil	Project/Programme	Evaluation of Human Rights of Indigenous and Quilombola Women: A Governance Matter	Very Good
2	Americas and the Caribbean	Colombia	Formative evaluation	Formative evaluation on the institutional use of the gender budgeting tracker	Good
3	Americas and the Caribbean	Ecuador	Project/Programme	Evaluation of the “Caminando” Project: Gender Equality and Empowerment for Displaced and Refugee Women in Ecuador	Good
4	Arab States	Syria	IES-led Programme	Syria Phase II Programme	Very Good
5	Arab States	Jordan	Project/Programme	EU Madad Phase 2	Very Good
6	Asia and the Pacific	China	Project/Programme	Evaluation of UN-Women’s domestic violence prevention and response in post COVID-19 China programme	Good
7	Asia and the Pacific	Bangladesh	Project/Programme	Combatting gender-based violence in Bangladesh project	Very Good
8	Asia and the Pacific	Papua New Guinea	Project/Programme	End of programme evaluation of the safe and prosperity districts projects (SPD 1 and 2) and the market economic recovery and inclusion projects	Good
9	Asia and the Pacific	Fiji MCO	Project/Programme	Market for Change	Very Good
10	Asia and the Pacific	Timor-Leste	IES-led Country Portfolio Evaluation	Timor-Leste Country Portfolio Evaluation	Very Good
11	Corporate/IES	HQ/IES	Corporate evaluations/Activities	Corporate Thematic Evaluation of UN-Women’s Support to Women’s Political Participation: Insights from the Field	Very Good
12	Corporate/IES	HQ/IES	Corporate evaluations/Activities	The Feminist Collaborative Evaluation of UN-Women’s Approach to Social Norms Change	Very Good
13	East and Southern Africa	Kenya	Project/Programme	Final Evaluation of the Finland Programme Document Project	Very Good

#	Region	Country	Type	Title	Quality Rating
14	East and Southern Africa	Zimbabwe	Project/Programme	End of Project Evaluation Report “Prevention of COVID 19 infection among vulnerable women & Girls in Drought-Affected Districts (Guruve & Mbire) of Mashonaland Central, Zimbabwe”	Very Good
15	East and Southern Africa	Burundi	Country Portfolio Evaluation	Burundi Country Portfolio Evaluation	Very Good
16	East and Southern Africa	Kenya	Project/Programme	“Let it Not Happen Again” evaluation	Very Good
17	East and Southern Africa	Somalia	Project/Programme	Women’s Leadership, Access, Empowerment and Protection III Evaluation	Very Good
18	East and Southern Africa	Kenya	Project/Programme	Women’s Leadership, Access, Empowerment and Protection Evaluation	Very Good
19	East and Southern Africa	Kenya	Project/Programme	Climate Smart Agriculture Kenya Impact Evaluation	Good
20	East and Southern Africa	African Union Liaison Office	Project/Programme	UN-Women African Union Commission Memorandum of Understanding Evaluation, Final Report	Very Good
21	East and Southern Africa	Uganda	Project/Programme	Women’s Leadership, Access, Empowerment and Protection III Evaluation	Good
22	East and Southern Africa	Rwanda	IES-led Country Portfolio Evaluation	Rwanda Country Portfolio Evaluation	Very Good
23	East and Southern Africa	Rwanda	Project/Programme	Rwanda Joint Programme on Gender, Final Evaluation	Good
24	Europe and Central Asia	Georgia	Project/Programme	Final Evaluation of the Good Governance for Gender Equality in Georgia Project	Good
25	Europe and Central Asia	Georgia	Project/Programme	Final Evaluation of Women’s Economic Empowerment in the South Caucasus Phase II	Very Good
26	Europe and Central Asia	Serbia	Project/Programme	Project Support to Priority Actions for Gender Equality in Serbia II	Very Good

#	Region	Country	Type	Title	Quality Rating
27	Global/HQ-led	Multiple	Project/Programme	Final Evaluation “Second Chance Education and Vocational Learning Programme”	Good
28	West and Central Africa	Liberia	Project/Programme	Final Evaluation Report “Sustaining Peace and Reconciliation through Strengthening Land Governance and Dispute Resolution Mechanisms in Liberia”	Very Good
29	West and Central Africa	Ivory Coast	Project/Programme	Empowering women in agriculture through access to ICT in Ivory Coast	Very Good
30	West and Central Africa	Mali	Project/Programme	Promoting resilience, self-reliance and social cohesion among host communities and displaced populations with a focus on women and girls in southern Sudan and Mali	Good
31	West and Central Africa	Niger	IES-led Country Portfolio Evaluation	Niger Country Portfolio Evaluation	Good
32	West and Central Africa	Liberia	Project/Programme	Evaluation of Promoting Inclusive Political Participation and Elimination of Violence Against Women in Politics	Very Good
33	West and Central Africa	Nigeria	Project/Programme	Final evaluation report of UN-Women’s project on empowering women and girls for enhanced gender-based violence prevention and response in Borno and Yobe States, Northeast Nigeria	Good
34	West and Central Africa	Nigeria	Project/Programme	Mid-term evaluation of the ADVANCE Women’s Political Participation (2022–2025) project	Very Good
35	West and Central Africa	Mali	IES-led Country Portfolio Evaluation	Mali Country Portfolio Evaluation	Very Good